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**EVIDENCE**

**Tuesday, May 12, 2015**

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**Chair**

**Mr. Pat Martin**



## Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates

Tuesday, May 12, 2015

•(1100)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP)):** Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

Welcome to the meeting of the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates. Today we will be dealing with the main estimates and the reports on plans and priorities of the Privy Council Office.

We're pleased to welcome to our committee, if not a regular and frequent guest, at least an annual guest, Michelle Doucet, chief financial officer. With her is Karen Cahill, deputy chief financial officer.

You are very welcome, Ms. Doucet. Please take your time to give us your opening remarks. We'll go to questions after that.

**Ms. Michelle Doucet (Chief Financial Officer, Corporate Services, Privy Council Office):** Good morning, Mr. Chair and members of the committee. Thank you very much for inviting us to speak to you today.

The chair has introduced Karen and me. It's our pleasure to appear before you today to answer your questions on the 2015-16 main estimates for the Privy Council Office as well as its report on plans and priorities for the same fiscal year.

The PCO is seeking \$118.8 million in the 2015-16 main estimates. This is an overall increase of \$26,000 from the amount the PCO sought in last year's main estimates.

The PCO's main estimates increase for this year is mainly related to the following.

First is an increase of \$2.1 million in funding for the operations of the Canadian Secretariat to the Canada-U.S. Regulatory Cooperation Council. The goal of the Canada-U.S. Regulatory Cooperation Council, or the RCC as we call it, is to better align both regulatory systems to benefit industry, regulators, and the public, and boost North American trade and competitiveness. As part of the initial RCC action plan announced in December 2011, tangible results were achieved in such areas as product approvals, joint standards development, product reviews, and compliance and enforcement efforts. That action plan represented a significant first step in deepening regulatory alignment between Canada and the United States.

Budget 2014 reiterated Canada's commitment to the RCC for an additional three fiscal years: 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17. The strategic direction for the next phase of Canada-U.S. regulatory

cooperation is outlined in the RCC joint forward plan, which was released by both governments in August 2014. That plan responds directly to stakeholders' priorities and includes commitments by counterpart Canadian and U.S. departments to develop cooperative work plans across 24 broad areas of regulatory work. The additional funding will allow the Canadian RCC secretariat to continue its efforts to work with U.S. and Canadian partners to advance regulatory cooperation.

Second is an increase of \$1.2 million for the creation and operation of the central innovation hub at PCO. To explain this investment, it's important to understand that the context in which policy-makers operate has shifted dramatically in recent years, and because of that, the public service must leverage opportunities to increase the speed and effectiveness of the advice and options it delivers.

Last year, in May 2014, the Clerk of the Privy Council's Destination 2020 report announced several initiatives intended to respond to this challenge, including the establishment of a central innovation hub at PCO. The hub will provide departments with expertise and advice on applying new approaches to complex policy and program challenges. The hub will also help test, document, accelerate, replicate, and scale up successful innovation across the public service. Locating the hub at the Privy Council Office will amplify and align successful initiatives across departmental lines.

Third is an increase of \$0.3 million represents the portion of wage and salary increases to be paid to employees during fiscal year 2015-16, in accordance with specific collective agreements that were ratified in 2013-14.

At the time of the tabling of these estimates and PCO's report on plans and priorities, we projected a decrease of \$3.4 million related to three sunsetter initiatives, namely, the coordination of government-wide information for Canada's economic action plan; the Office of the Special Advisor on Human Smuggling and Illegal Migration, headed by Mr. Ward Elcock, the special advisor to the Prime Minister on this matter; and the Beyond the Border action plan, which gives effect to the 2011 declaration signed by Prime Minister Harper and President Obama, establishing a new long-term partnership accelerating the legitimate flow of people and goods between both countries while strengthening security and economic competitiveness.

Sunsetter initiatives are those initiatives that have time-limited authorities and/or funding because they are developed for a specific purpose and timeframe. They are periodically reviewed and often renewed to ensure that the intended goal is accomplished.

Subsequent to the tabling of these estimates and PCO's report on plans and priorities, Budget 2015 has confirmed the availability of funds for all three of these sunsetter initiatives, and in due course PCO will seek approval of all required authorities to access these funds.

• (1105)

Fourth, there is a decrease of \$0.3 million in funding for the implementation of various government-wide initiatives, including the continued consolidation of pay services, the implementation of the Canada School of Public Service's new business model, the elimination of wasteful spending on late fees and interest charges to suppliers, and the web renewal initiative.

Fifth is a \$1.3 million decrease to PCO's planned voted expenditures and a corresponding \$1.3 million increase in statutory expenditures due to an internal budget transfer from the operating fund, which falls under the voted expenditures, to the employee benefit plans, which fall under the statutory expenditures, to better align PCO's reference levels with its actual spending profile. The transfer has no impact on PCO's total authorities.

In addition, PCO's statutory spending is being reduced by \$80,300. Following the July 2013 cabinet shuffle, there was a machinery of government change where the Hon. Denis Lebel was appointed Minister of Infrastructure, Communities and Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec. The salary and motor car allowance were moved to the office of Infrastructure Canada and therefore no longer appear under PCO's statutory forecasts.

[Translation]

This completes the explanation of PCO's 2015-16 main estimates.

I will turn now to PCO's report on plans and priorities for fiscal year 2015-16 to give you a brief overview of PCO's planning highlights.

To begin, it is important to note that PCO's sole strategic outcome is to ensure that the government's agenda and decision making are supported and implemented and the institutions of government are supported and maintained. In this regard, PCO will continue to play a central coordination and advisory role to support the government in furthering its objectives pursuant to its mandate to provide professional, non-partisan advice and support to the Prime Minister and cabinet. PCO plans to meet this strategic outcome by focusing on four key organizational priorities during the year.

PCO's first priority is to support the Prime Minister and portfolio ministers in exercising their overall leadership responsibilities. PCO does this by providing professional, non-partisan advice and support on the entire spectrum of the government's policy, legislative and government administration priorities. This includes, among other things, advice on social and economic affairs; regional development; foreign affairs; national security; defence; governor-in-council appointments; intergovernmental relations; and, the environment.

The second of PCO's priorities will be to support the deliberations of cabinet and its committees on key policy initiatives and coordinate medium-term policy planning. In order to meet this priority, throughout the year, PCO will provide advice to cabinet and its committees on the overall communications strategies necessary to support the government's priorities. It will also provide guidance to and perform a rigorous challenge function for departments to advance policy, legislative and government administration proposals that are high quality, prepared in a timely manner, and focused on addressing priority areas identified by the government.

PCO's third priority is to enable the management and accountability of government. PCO provides strategic advice on whole-of-government transformation initiatives, public service renewal and other major management reforms, which will ultimately contribute to sound government administration, enhanced productivity in the public service, and improved services to Canadians.

• (1110)

To this end, the PCO will support the Clerk of the Privy Council and the Deputy Minister Board of Management and Renewal in the identification of whole of government proposals to advance the government's priority for improved efficiency and effectiveness. In addition, PCO will actively engage and collaborate with implicated departments and other central agencies in the implementation of these proposals.

In line with the major transformational initiatives taking place across the Public Service, PCO's fourth and final priority is to strengthen the department's own internal management practices. During the year, PCO will continue to implement and support the Employee Performance Management Program at PCO to meet the requirements of the Treasury Board of Canada's new Directive Performance Management, in order to promote a commitment, shared by managers and employees, to sustaining a culture of high performance in support of government priorities.

With respect to information management, PCO will enhance digital record keeping and information use and sharing practices across the department, and support ongoing compliance with the Government of Canada policy framework.

PCO will also complete the transfer of the department's pay services to the Public Service Pay Centre in Miramichi, New Brunswick, in support of the government-wide Consolidation of Pay Services Project and the Pay Modernisation Initiative.

Finally, PCO will address security and emergency management priorities by strengthening the governance structures and organizational culture related to security and emergency management and business continuity management; and strengthening the expertise of Security Operations personnel.

[English]

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to explain the initiatives related to PCO's 2015-16 main estimates and report on plans and priorities.

We would be pleased to address your questions.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms. Doucet.

We'll go immediately to questions.

For the NDP, the official opposition, five minutes, Mr. Mathieu Ravignat.

**Mr. Mathieu Ravignat (Pontiac, NDP):** Thank you, Chair.

Thank you for being here, Madame Doucet.

To start off, could you confirm if the Prime Minister has increased the size of his office, both in personnel and in size, and can you tell me why that would be the case?

• (1115)

**Ms. Michelle Doucet:** Thank you for the question.

The budget for the Prime Minister's Office and how much the Prime Minister's Office has spent on personnel is reported annually in the public accounts, which are published, generally speaking, in the fall. I believe that those numbers—and Karen may have the details on those—have remained fairly constant over the last four years.

**Ms. Karen Cahill (Deputy Chief Financial Officer, Corporate Services, Privy Council Office):** That's absolutely correct. As Ms. Doucet explained, the final expenditures will be published in the public accounts in the fall, but the budget for the Prime Minister's Office has not increased since the past year.

**Mr. Mathieu Ravignat:** Thank you.

Basically, if I'm correct in my reading of the mains, the expenditures for the public service leadership and direction program will increase to \$3.1 million. I think you mentioned that as well.

I'm just wondering if this increase is related to Blueprint 2020 at all?

**Ms. Michelle Doucet:** Thank you for the question.

Yes, the increase is related to Blueprint 2020. Last year, in May 2014, the then Clerk of the Privy Council, Wayne Wouters, in his Destination 2020 report, which is very much supported by the new Clerk of the Privy Council, Madam Janice Charette, announced several initiatives to respond to the Blueprint 2020 plan. One of them was the creation of the central innovation hub at the Privy Council. We, in the estimates process that this House approves, in supplementary estimates (C) sought approval for and received approval to create the central innovation hub at the Privy Council Office. That's the increase that you see reflected in our main estimates.

**Mr. Mathieu Ravignat:** With regard to the public service leadership and direction program, there will be an increase. I was wondering how that's going to be meted out, I guess. Are we mainly talking about programs related to training management, or are we

talking about public servants in general? Will it serve to hire more public servants or is it strictly training?

**Ms. Michelle Doucet:** That's a great question.

The increase is mainly related to salaries for public servants who are working at the Privy Council Office. We're using a mix of temporary secondments and assignments, with a few full-time positions. There will be other costs that will include professional and special services and a bit of travelling.

This investment we're making supports a small, modest footprint, where everybody works together in a collaborative environment. They have a small team that we've brought into PCO, so it's an augmentation to the number of folks we have working in the PCO, and they're all public servants.

**Mr. Mathieu Ravignat:** Okay.

With regard to your report on plans and priorities, it was projected that full-time equivalents at the PCO would decline from 851 to 835, and then the figures changed, from 844 to 842. Why the change?

**Ms. Michelle Doucet:** Mr. Chair, I'm going to ask Ms. Cahill to answer that one for you.

**Ms. Karen Cahill:** Actually, the change is related to increased salaries for the RCC, as well as the innovation hub, and a decrease for the transfer of staff to Miramichi. This is mainly why there is a difference between our main estimates and the RPP.

**The Chair:** That wraps up your time, Mr. Ravignat. Thank you very much.

Next, for the Conservatives, we have the vice-chair of the committee, Mr. Greg Kerr.

**Mr. Greg Kerr (West Nova, CPC):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I welcome our visitors this morning.

On page 2 of your presentation on the main estimates, you're dealing with your regulatory process with American partners and so on. Our main study this year has been on the regulatory process, on standards councils. I think we remain almost as confused today as when we started with the process. I'm not expecting you to clear it all up, but this seems to be fitting in with part of the changes, the more robust trade issues and so on that take place between Canada and the United States. So I have a double question.

First, could you elaborate more on what is done under that authority? Second, how do you fit in within the standards process, within the council, the board and so on, and the main volunteer efforts that take place to try to stabilize...? There seems to be some communication difficulty that takes place there. If you can help us out there, it would be much appreciated.

• (1120)

[Translation]

**Ms. Michelle Doucet:** Thank you for the question.

[English]

I'd be happy to try to help.

What I'm going to do is to talk about PCO's role and the function that we fulfill out of the RCC, the regulatory cooperation council.

The RCC was created in December, 2011, falling out of the agreement that was signed by the Prime Minister and the American President at the same time they signed the Beyond the Border action plan. The RCC was created to better align both country's regulatory regimes with a view to eliminating the unnecessary duplication. The reason why that work was possible was that both countries have highly efficient regulatory systems based on compatible outcomes. But over time the way they've done it has evolved differently, and it's creating the problems to which you've referred.

When putting together the initial work plan that was announced at that time, 29 initiatives were laid out with a very focused effort on stakeholder engagement because, as you say, that conversation really infuses the work that has to be done. What followed, I think, exceeded a lot of expectations in terms of the productivity and fruitfulness of those conversations.

During the first part of that work, which took place every number of years, key initiatives included the creation of the common electronic submission gateway whereby both countries can submit applications for approval of pharmaceuticals and biological products to both Health Canada and its American counterpart, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. This was a new enhancement to the Canadian regulatory system, and I think helpful to industry.

Another example of something positive that came out of it was regulatory oversight of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway, where a pilot project was conducted that included 10 pilot ship inspections to explore various joint approaches. Building on those pilot projects was really kind of an incubation work where people got to test and succeed or fail.

The new joint forward action plan was released in August of 2014 and said that we're ready to mature this. We're ready to institutionalize work plans in Canadian federal departments and their American counterparts in 24 broad regulatory areas, and there will actually be public servants on both sides who are accountable for making progress.

There are a couple of interesting files that they're working on that I find useful to know. One is on the lack of common labelling for paint. We use paint here in Canada and in the United States, but the labelling is not common and the regulation around that is not common. It creates between \$38 million and \$50 million worth of inefficiencies for every 15 months that this misalignment persists. Imagine what industry could do with that money if they had it.

Another example is lipstick. Currently, to produce a lipstick in Canada or the United States, you need three pieces of paper and \$600 in the United States or \$1,000 to apply in Canada. If you want to add sun screen to that lipstick, an SPF factor, it doesn't change in the United States but in Canada it turns lipstick into a drug. The cost to get the regulatory approval for that lipstick with the SPF is anywhere between \$100,000 to \$200,000. That's an example of the kind of work that the RCC will be supporting departments on both sides to pursue.

**The Chair:** Mr. Kerr, that concludes your time.

Thank you very much, Madam Doucet.

Next for the NDP we have Mr. Tarik Brahmi.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Tarik Brahmi (Saint-Jean, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I see in the 2015-2016 report on plans and priorities that for the next three years, no expenditures are planned for boards of inquiry. The budget was about \$10 million in 2011-2012 and in 2012-2013, but today, no funding has been allocated for boards of inquiry.

Can you explain to us why?

• (1125)

**Ms. Karen Cahill:** I will answer that question. Thank you.

First of all, it is important to mention that boards of inquiry are established by cabinet. Be it in its report on plans and priorities for 2015-2016 or in its main estimates, PCO does not request funding for boards of inquiry. The reason for that is, if no board of inquiry is established, the money that would have been requested would then be considered to be a surplus, which PCO could not use.

When a board of inquiry is created, the money set aside for that objective is considered to be a dedicated fund, reserved only for boards of inquiry. If a board of inquiry must be established, interim authorities can support it. In the meantime, funding must be requested from Treasury Board. This explains why PCO does not have any funds set aside for boards of inquiry in its report on plans and priorities for 2015-2016.

**Mr. Tarik Brahmi:** In that case, what were the \$13.2 million and \$11 million from 2010 to 2012 spent on?

**Ms. Karen Cahill:** It was for the Commission of Inquiry into the Decline of Sockeye Salmon in the Fraser River.

**Mr. Tarik Brahmi:** Very well.

Let's talk about the 2015-2016 main estimates. I see that there is no new funding planned for the Beyond the Border Action Plan. Does that mean that this action plan is considered to be finished and that there will be no further oversight or evaluation of it?

**Ms. Karen Cahill:** As you probably know, funding for the Beyond the Border Action Plan ended March 31, 2015. In the 2015 budget, there is funding allocated for that program. Treasury Board will appear before this committee and before Parliament to get the necessary authorizations for the future.

**Mr. Tarik Brahmi:** I have seen advertisements concerning, among other things, the preclearance of goods and the fact that preclearance is becoming more widespread. This is not a program that is coming to an end. It's difficult to understand why money is not being given for this program when it has just moved on to another level.

[English]

**Ms. Michelle Doucet:** You're right in saying that the government attaches a lot of importance to this program. Of course, the preclearance agreement that was just signed and announced is a historic agreement for both countries. That's why the government, in Budget 2015, signalled the continuation of funding available for this sunsetter initiative. In my opening remarks I spoke briefly to what a sunsetter initiative is—an initiative that, when created, has a foreseeable end date. Officials in the government make their best guess at the time of how long they think the program will need to achieve that objective.

In the case of a number of initiatives we've discussed today, whether it's the RCC or the Beyond the Border action plan, the work that's been undertaken has turned out to be quite fruitful and the government has decided to make a further investment. So that money will be available to the group at PCO that's coordinating the Beyond the Border action plan, together with other departments responsible in the Government of Canada.

[Translation]

**Mr. Tarik Brahmī:** Thank you very much.

[English]

**The Chair:** Have you finished, Mr. Brahmī?

Okay, thank you very much.

Then we'll go to the Conservatives, Mr. Chris Warkentin, for five minutes, please.

**Mr. Chris Warkentin (Peace River, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My colleague Mr. Kerr talked a little bit about the study we're doing with regard to standards, and we're very interested in the work PCO is doing in reducing the encumbrances on businesses. We heard from the Standards Council of Canada that it has become increasingly frustrated with what it believes is one of the larger impediments in the whole process, which is the Canadian General Standards Board.

Can you confirm whether or not the secretariat will be looking at some of the current structures we have in Canada vis-à-vis those in the United States? It's my understanding that the United States' standards development organizations are basically industry led. They have commonality amongst Canadian and U.S. partners. We have this unique thing in Canada with a board that's purely Canadian and has no U.S. involvement. Can you speak to what the secretariat has been doing with regard to the board and whether or not they have any opinions with regard to that board?

• (1130)

**Ms. Michelle Doucet:** I can't speak directly to your question but I do have some context that may be helpful to you, so let me take a stab at that.

As I said, the work of the RCC started in December 2011. It started because there was a fair amount of common ground between the two countries in having highly evolved regulatory systems. Here we are in May 2015, and I think the folks at PCO would tell you that they've learned lessons out of this exercise. They've obviously

worked with their American counterparts, but they've also worked closely with industry in both countries.

First of all, they've learned that relationships, coordination, and planning matter, so in both the initial action plan in 2011 and in the forward action plan announced last August, you're going to see an emphasis on that. Following on that, it's really important to work together to pick and choose the priority areas of work and then take a comprehensive approach. When I was here before, I talked about the 29 working groups, and this time I'm talking about 24 areas of broad regulation.

[Translation]

It's not by chance.

[English]

These are conscious choices of areas that folks across the board want to work on because they think that they can make real differences, and I gave a couple of areas of possibility with paint and lipstick earlier.

Stakeholders are key, which means that transparency is a must, so you're going to always see posted on various websites updates on what's happening. For instance, the stakeholders met, I believe, in the fall to talk—and you're always going to hear what we heard and what we discussed. I think that's helpful in having conversations with other stakeholders.

Finally, one of the big lessons learned when you're working on this kind of structural progress is that you need a high level of commitment, which is why our organization and the RCC is based out of PCO. It reflects the government's priority on this, and in the United States it's based out of the White House. There's attention being focused on government-to-government considerations on perhaps less interesting but really important things like information-sharing and funding mechanisms. When push comes to shove, how are we actually going to work together?

**Mr. Chris Warkentin:** The work continues. Do you have any sense as to when they'll have a report out or if they'll have any information that they'll be sharing with Canadians with regard to the progress?

**Ms. Michelle Doucet:** I don't have that with me here today. In the past they have reported at least a couple of times a year. In the fall there's usually a report because they usually have a big stakeholders' meeting where everybody comes together, and then again in the course of the summer. That's my understanding, and that pattern will probably continue. I would also say that, as we indicated in our opening remarks, funding for the RCC continues through to 2016-2017. Is that right, Karen?

**Ms. Karen Cahill:** It's until 2017-2018.

**Ms. Michelle Doucet:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** That concludes your time, Mr. Warkentin, I'm afraid. You may get another round.

Next, for the Liberal party, we have vice-chair Mr. Gerry Byrne.

**Hon. Gerry Byrne (Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte, Lib.):** Thank you, Chairman, and thank you to our witnesses.

I'd like to inquire about the role of the Privy Council Office in the function of media monitoring, public opinion polling, and government-wide advertising.

Would you be able to give the committee an overview of PCO's role in those three initiatives, as well as a comparison of recent years of budgetary commitments provided for PCO or in partnership with Treasury Board or other departments for those three initiatives?

• (1135)

[Translation]

**Ms. Michelle Doucet:** Thank you for the question.

[English]

I think I can be helpful on that, and I'll try to be concise as I give you my explanation. I may run out of time in getting to all your questions, so let me start.

PCO's role in government advertising and public opinion research and media monitoring is set out in the communications policy, which is one of the policies from the Treasury Board suite of policies. It's a broad and long policy. It's about 50 pages long and it sets out the roles of various departments and pieces of government and, in particular, the PCO's role in all Government of Canada advertising and public opinion research. PCO's role is designed to comply with that policy.

Let me speak to one very important or foundational tenet of that policy and then I'll start with government advertising in particular.

The policy says that the government has a duty to advise Canadians and to communicate what it's doing on its priorities and the actions it is taking. Based on that, decisions around how government advertising is conducted are played out pretty much like decisions for any other government priorities. It starts with cabinet; cabinet makes a decision on advertising priorities, what the priorities are, and what level of funding should be attached to them. Departments work with Treasury Board Secretariat to get the required management approvals to implement advertising activities. Then the line departments are individually accountable for carrying out those advertising activities. They are assisted in that by the Department of Public Works, which helps them with what I would call accountability mechanisms.

For instance, on an annual basis the Department of Public Works publishes the amount of money spent for the fiscal year before. The other thing that Public Works does is that for major communications advertising files it has guidelines in place before you go out on how to make sure you're going to get the best value for your money. And then after the fact, it has standard evaluation criteria. So all advertising campaigns are evaluated through the standard criteria. You can see that there is the usual rubric of accountability mechanisms around the expenditure of public funds.

In terms of how much was spent, I have an overview for the last five years. Again, you'll find these figures on Public Works' website. In 2009-10, during the global economic recession and the government's expenditure campaign as well as an H1N1 pandemic that required extensive advertising—I think that was the high-water mark—\$136.3 million was spent on government advertising. The next year in 2010-11 those expenditures dropped to \$83.3 million. In

2011-12 they decreased to \$78.5 million. In 2012-13 they were \$69 million. In the last report published, which was 2013-14, and I believe that report was just published in April of this year, they are reported as \$75.2 million.

With respect to finding information on public opinion research, departments file that information in a place that you might not necessarily think to look, so I'll highlight it for you, and that is Library and Archives Canada. Information is publicly available on that.

Finally, to talk about media monitoring at the Privy Council Office, the Privy Council Office has as part of our main work a branch called PCO communications. Pursuant to the communications policy, it supports the government in implementing its priorities. It provides communications advice and coordination, and to do that it obviously has to monitor the media cycle, which as everybody knows is 24/7.

• (1140)

**The Chair:** Mr. Byrne, that was a simple question and a very complicated answer. Your time has expired.

Thank you very much, Ms. Doucet.

Thank you, Mr. Byrne.

Next for the Conservatives, we have Brad Butt for five minutes, please, Brad.

**Mr. Brad Butt (Mississauga—Streetsville, CPC):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Welcome, ladies. Thank you very much for being here. It's my first time as a committee member having you here for the main estimates, and I certainly appreciate the thoroughness of the presentation.

I want to go back to the Regulatory Cooperation Council. You have indicated that there is a \$2.1 million funding increase in the operations. What specifically is that for? The reason I ask is that I have met with at least a dozen businesses in my riding that would love to see this process happening a lot faster. They are bringing products in from the United States. Canada is a small market, so when they are making a product for 300 million people in the United States and then they have to completely change everything to sell it to 34 million people in Canada, it's not sustainable. You gave a couple of examples, Michelle, of the lipstick. We know this is a problem. Is the increase in funding to speed this up? Is that our goal in trying to do this, or is it not a factor of money? Is it just a factor of these various sectors having more meetings, having better coordination, and, sector by sector, working better so that we can get harmonized standards across the border?

**Ms. Michelle Doucet:** I would characterize it as a continuation of funding, as opposed to an increase per se. The continuation of funding for three years—because this is a sunsetter program, and we have funding contingent for three years as per the supplementary estimates (C)—is a sign of the success of the work that is being done. Now, stakeholders are rightly impatient in terms of the pace, but I think the system is surprised with how productive the work has been.



I remember when it was announced in 2011, and everybody was paying attention to the Beyond the Border action plan because it had the kind of words that get headlines—“border security”, “economic competitiveness”—and “regulatory alignment” was, you know, a bit less sensational.

The very satisfying thing about the work that the RCC has done is that it has made a lot of progress on the initiative. The fact that departments in the Government of Canada such as Health Canada and Transport Canada are actually going to have senior public servants who will have, in their performance agreements every year, the requirement to deliver on the plans that are put together in negotiation with the United States means that we have an embedded commitment in the day-to-day lifeblood of what the government does in this regard.

I think that is really encouraging. At some point, the sunsetter program which supports PCO's work... We coordinate all the departments together, and we coordinate the negotiations with our American counterparts. At some point, we are going to be a bit like Nanny McPhee, you know. Departments are going to get so good at this that they won't need us anymore. They will want us, but they won't need us anymore. I think that the feedback loop between industry and what their needs are can never go away. It's really important for that to stay robust and vibrant, always.

**Mr. Brad Butt:** Do we have some sectors and some departments that are just more keen to get this work done and others that are just stuck in the world of inertia? From the feedback I am getting, I get the sense that there are some sectors that are much more proactive in getting these things done and harmonized between the two countries, and then others where nothing seems to be moving ahead at all.

What do we do to get those foot-draggers more actively involved? Is it your role through the Privy Council Office to light a fire under some of this stuff, or is that really department- or sector-driven?

**Ms. Michelle Doucet:** I am not an expert on regulatory sectors, but I have had some experience with complexity. One of the other members of the committee asked about the pre-clearance agreement under the Beyond the Border action plan, which was a bit of a counterpart to the Regulatory Cooperation Council, where stakeholders also rightly have high expectations about progress. The pre-clearance agreement took three years to negotiate because it was complex. There were hard pieces to figure out, such as the rules to govern the border guards on both sides. What is the legal framework to govern the behaviour of border guards on both sides?

Similarly, in the regulatory sector—as I think we all behave when we start off with something new—you get at the low-hanging fruit, and then you get to the hard stuff. The hard stuff takes time because it is complex, whether that's because of capacity, the inherent nature of the work, or perhaps the changing nature of technology. I can't speak to whether there are foot-draggers, but I can tell you that the work they are attacking now is the harder stuff, the complex stuff. I think you will see that the government in the line departments coordinated by PCO is very committed to making real progress.

• (1145)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Butt. You're well over time.

Thank you, Ms. Doucet.

That concludes our first round of questioning. We'll have time for three more five-minute rounds. Yes, I think we should at least that.

So, Mr. Ravignat, five minutes to you please.

**Mr. Mathieu Ravignat:** Could you indicate whether or not there's been any evaluation or re-evaluation of government advertising at the PCO recently?

**Ms. Michelle Doucet:** As I described in my earlier answer, the decisions around government advertising are taken by cabinet, with a management precision added by the Treasury Board. I can't speak to cabinet deliberations, so I'm not in a position to talk about whether they have made any decisions in that regard. I am in a position to describe the cycle, as I have earlier, and the management rubric around it.

**Mr. Mathieu Ravignat:** Perhaps you're in a position to tell me whether or not PCO staff have recently given any advice to cabinet on government advertising?

**Ms. Michelle Doucet:** Unfortunately, Mr. Chair, I'm not in a position to speak about the advice that we provide to ministers at the Privy Council Office.

**Mr. Mathieu Ravignat:** There was a 149-page document on using the tag line strong, proud and free, I believe it was. That 149-page document was coming from the Treasury Board to my understanding. It's been very difficult for us to get a copy of it. It was sent to cabinet to give them advice on whether or not to use that tag line in government advertising.

Did the PCO office have anything to do with that document?

**Ms. Michelle Doucet :** Let me talk a bit about what PCO's role is in advertising, because I worry sometimes that PCO's role sounds a bit murky when we say that we provide advice to the Prime Minister, coordinate cabinet committee meetings, and support the clerk in her role as the head of the public service. Let me give some precision in the area of government advertising.

The Privy Council Office plays a central role in the coordination, review, and management of government communications pursuant to the communications policy, including advertising as determined by the Prime Minister and cabinet. Our responsibilities include supporting and monitoring the implementation of cabinet decisions across government.

Cabinet takes the decisions. We support the monitoring and implementation of those decisions, providing institutions in government with advice, and support, and approval of their communications planning and management, including in the area of advertising. We coordinate and support the planning of the horizontal or government-wide communications by designating lead institutions and assigning special responsibilities.

I spoke earlier about the expenditures in 2009 for the H1N1 pandemic campaign. You can appreciate the need to have a government-wide approach there, and similarly, in the Ebola crisis that was playing out late last summer and through the fall.

That's a bit of a summary of what PCO's role in advertising is.

**Mr. Mathieu Ravignat:** I would assume then that you do provide advice on the usefulness of advertising to various departments and ministries.

• (1150)

**Ms. Michelle Doucet:** As I said earlier, I'm not in a position to talk about the exact nature of the advice that we provide to ministers.

**Mr. Mathieu Ravignat:** Not to ministers; I said the departments or ministries.

**Ms. Michelle Doucet:** Pardon me?

**Mr. Mathieu Ravignat:** I understand that you don't want to talk about cabinet and ministers in cabinet. But you do provide advice to staff who are in ministries and departments.

**Ms. Michelle Doucet:** That's pursuant to our role to provide support and coordination around communications requirements, and the role is set according to the communications policy.

**Mr. Mathieu Ravignat:** Correct me if I'm wrong, but if CRA decides to advertise a particular tax credit, you're in a position to look at the content and give them advice as to whether or not it's useful.

**Ms. Michelle Doucet:** When I talked about the rubric of accountability, I talked about it after cabinet and Treasury Board make their decisions. Then it falls to individual departments to implement and, obviously, the expenditure of public funds by each individual department is ultimately the responsibility of the minister in charge of that department.

**Mr. Mathieu Ravignat:** But on the content, I'm just talking about the content of a particular ad.

**Ms. Michelle Doucet:** I'm not in a position to speak to the content of a particular advertisement.

**Mr. Mathieu Ravignat:** So you don't give advice to the departments and ministries with regard to the content of advertisements?

**Ms. Michelle Doucet:** The Privy Council Office provides advice on communications matters, which would include advertising matters, as to whether it complies with the government direction that was set out, and also whether that will align with what other departments are doing. So, for instance, I talked about Ebola and other public health concerns. You want to make sure that the right hand knows what the left hand is doing when government goes out to communicate so that citizens have the best possible advice and support from their government.

**The Vice-Chair (Mr. Greg Kerr):** Thank you very much. That's the time on this one.

So now we go to Ms. Young for five minutes, please.

**Ms. Wai Young (Vancouver South, CPC):** Thank you so much for coming and covering such a wide spectrum of very useful information.

I just wanted to ask two questions, and time is always limited, so I do apologize for that.

First, I was quite intrigued by what Mr. Butt was saying in regard to the whole standardization of standards, because we had previous witnesses here regarding this issue. Does PCO have a role in terms of speeding that process up because, clearly, some of that needs to be

sped up? And how might PCO play a role in that? That's my first question.

My second question is totally different in that I was very intrigued by your central innovation hub. I wanted to set you loose a little bit to let us know what your hopes and dreams are, or what Canadians' hopes and dreams should be around our expectations around that hub.

Thank you very much.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Michelle Doucet:** Thank you.

[*English*]

With respect to your first question, I don't have that information with me. But if it's the will of the committee, I'd be happy to go back and see if there's anything I could usefully provide to the committee on the question you asked.

But I have more to tell you about the innovation hub—and Karen, jump in if I miss anything. As I said, the policy context has changed as a result of the 24/7 news cycle and the rapid evolution of technology. Whereas policy used to be the purview of one or two government institutions in previous years, now it's pretty easy for everybody to be a policy expert. I have an almost 19-year-old son at home, and he provides me with his policy views on a regular basis.

**Ms. Wai Young:** So do I.

**Ms. Michelle Doucet:** Yes.

In response to that, the clerk of the public service has made a commitment to really transform the way our policy community provides its advice and the speed at which we do that. Across the government we are seeing a number of innovation hubs arise in discrete areas. At Industry Canada, for instance, there's an innovation hub on small and medium-sized enterprises. We are locating one at PCO to take advantage of the fact that we are a central agency. And if we see work taking place across the government that has a lot of value, particularly if it can be replicated, we can reach down into that department and say, this is really good stuff and we think it should be used across the government or in other regulatory and security departments. Thus, the central nature of the innovation hub.

You can see how it has very much of a connector role in that respect. It also has a catalyst role. Again, because of the bird's eye view we have in the Privy Council Office, we can see different influences coming from different places. We can share that information in areas where policy innovation is needed. We've spoken a lot about the need to improve regulatory alignment. Well, it may be that PCO can play a catalyst role in that regard.

Then, finally, what we want to do is be a resource to all government departments in this regard. One of the interesting things about the investment we're making is that it's not a lot of money. It's a very modest footprint. It has been fitted up to the Workplace 2.0 standard, which is to say “appropriate to the use of public funds”. But anybody in the public service can go there and use the facilities. So it's very much an open space for public servants.

• (1155)

**Ms. Wai Young:** Would you say, then, that while the sky is not falling, the world has changed, and that this government has been fairly responsive and, I would say, fairly forward thinking? You mentioned documents like “Destination 2020”, the blueprint document, and so on that are mapping out how Canada—the bureaucracy, the government—processes, gathers, and applies the information in the new-world of technology, such as with the marine distress communications centre in Vancouver, to increase the availability and working with modern technology. In that case, it moved from a dial-in system to a smart phone system, which is much more useful and better for government—and, further down the road, systems to serve Canadians.

**Ms. Michelle Doucet:** One of the change drivers I failed to mention is, of course, demographics with regard to the aging population and what that means in terms of the need for government programs and also the composition of the public service. I talked about the work done in the public service by the previous clerk in launching Destination 2020 and in saying, look, we have this remarkable institution here: we use 200,000 people to support this wonderful country of ours. With the demographics and with the technology drivers that you just outlined, everything is changing really, really quickly. We are in some ways driving the bus while we're changing its tires.

That was really the impetus towards the energy put into Destination 2020. It's a multi-year initiative. It does focus on technology. Technology is a tricky thing, because people's expectations are really, really high, and the pressure to deliver is correspondingly high.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Young. That concludes your time.

That also concludes the amount of time we have set aside to deal with the Privy Council Office main estimates and the report on plans and priorities.

Thank you for a very thorough and comprehensive job, Madam Doucet and Ms Cahill. That was very helpful and useful to us.

We will suspend briefly while we bring forward our next witnesses.

• \_\_\_\_\_ (Pause) \_\_\_\_\_

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• (1200)

**The Chair:** Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. We'll reconvene our meeting of the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates.

We're pleased to welcome presentation, representatives from the Canada School of Public Service. I believe Ms. Danielle May-Cuconato, vice-president of corporate services and the chief financial officer, will be leading the delegation and making opening remarks.

Ms. May-Cuconato, perhaps you'd like to introduce your other colleagues. The floor is then yours to begin your opening remarks.

**Ms. Danielle May-Cuconato (Vice-President, Corporate Services, and Chief Financial Officer, Canada School of Public Service):** Thank you very much.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Chair, I am pleased to appear before the committee, along with my colleagues, Jean-François Fleury, Vice-President of Learning Programs, and Geofredo Garay, Deputy Chief Financial Officer.

I would like to take a few minutes to describe the mandate and activities of the Canada School of Public Service.

[*English*]

The school is the central learning and training institute for federal public servants, providing training in both official languages across Canada.

In 2013-2014 we launched a strategic directions initiative, which is a comprehensive review of our learning services, performance, and business model. The review was needed to ensure that the school continued to be relevant and responsive to the learning needs of the public service in a time of significant technological change and resource pressures.

At the same time, the public service developed a vision and a plan to meet the challenges of the future, an initiative led by the Clerk of the Privy Council called Blueprint 2020. It was in this context that the government adopted a public service-wide commitment to learning to ensure the public servants are supported to do a better job today and build the skills and knowledge needed for tomorrow.

In our 22nd annual report to the Prime Minister on the Public Service of Canada, released last week, the clerk made specific mention of the importance of learning, including the school's role. She stated "To better meet learning and training needs, the Canada School of Public Service is revitalizing its curriculum, and modernizing its delivery of learning as part of the new enterprise-wide approach to learning."

• (1205)

[*Translation*]

Working in partnership with departments, with communities of practices and other stakeholders, the school is transforming. Our efforts are focused on designing and delivering learning that is common to all federal organizations, regardless of their mandate. For public servants, this means increased access to training on common knowledge, skills and functions. For departments and agencies, this provides a framework to support talent and performance management, and allows them to focus on their mandate-specific training needs.

At the public service level, this new approach to learning will help foster a culture of high performance and innovation, and reinforce the importance of continuous learning.

[English]

To support the new approach, the school is moving from a funding model based on appropriation and cost recovery to one that is fully funded from appropriations. Implementing this new business model and full delivery of the new common curriculum will be phased in over three years. We have just begun the second year of this transition.

At this point, I would like to provide the committee with details of the school's financial position. The school's current sources of funding are derived from appropriation, revenue generated from cost recovery—

**The Chair:** Madam May-Cuconato, I am sorry to interrupt you briefly, but as you notice the bells are ringing and the lights are flashing. There's a vote on a question of privilege being held in the House.

Seeing that we're only one minute away from the chamber, as a committee and with the consent of the committee we can agree to continue to meet, I would suggest, until perhaps 10 minutes before the bells stop ringing. If we have another 20 minutes we can at least hear your entire presentation and perhaps have time for one round of questioning from each side.

Do we have the consent of the committee?

**Some voices:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Very good.

I'm sorry to interrupt you, Madam May-Cuconato.

**Ms. Danielle May-Cuconato:** No problem.

I'll try to maybe shorten it a little bit, if I can, to provide more time for the committee.

**The Chair:** Well, you have 20 minutes.

**Ms. Danielle May-Cuconato:** As I mentioned, the school is moving from a blended-funding model to one that is fully funded and requires no new dollars. The old model emphasized revenue generation, whereas the new model allows the school to focus on developing the core competencies of all public servants. Under the new fully funded model, overall funding will go from \$41 million provided through the main estimates in 2014-15 and increase gradually to \$80 million in 2018-19. The funding will be sourced from client departments' reference levels based on their number of employees. Departments included in this new funding model are those in schedules I, IV, and V of the Financial Administration Act.

To better and more directly reflect the school's operations, beginning in 2015-16, we are adopting a new program alignment architecture that is simpler and clearer and that aligns with our new business model. The school also has a new single strategic outcome, which is that federal public service employees have the common knowledge, skills, and competencies to fulfill their responsibilities in serving Canadians.

In 2015-16, the school is projecting to spend \$91 million, and in the 2015-16 main estimates it requested approval for expenditures of \$71 million. The school plans to fund the difference from unspent revenue carried forward from 2014-15. Under subsection 18(2) of

the Canada School of Public Service Act, the school has statutory authority to carry forward any unspent revenue to the next fiscal year. Unspent revenue carried forward is reported in the public accounts. Fiscal years 2014-15 and 2015-16 are the first two years of a three-year transition plan from the old model to the new funding model.

Expenditures will remain within the \$90 million range through 2016-17 to complete transformation initiatives that include modernizing the school's curriculum, increasing learner accessibility through technology-enabled solutions, modernizing classroom facilities, and optimizing office space including investing in Workplace 2.0.

Once the transformation initiatives are completed, the school's spending will reach steady state at approximately \$80 million. To illustrate overall savings to the crown, using 2013-14 as a benchmark, the school spent \$85 million the last full year under the old model. The projected spending level in 2017-18 will be \$80 million, the first full year under the new model. In other words, there will be a savings of \$5 million.

During the transition to the new model, we are endeavouring to minimize impact on indeterminate employees. The school is leveraging existing resources within the public service by using a risk-based staffing strategy, thereby avoiding increasing our permanent salary envelope. Spending in non-salary dollars is expected to increase from \$21 million in 2013-14 to \$25 million in 2017-18. This increase reflects our intention to invest in continuous renewal and in updating our curriculum, and to keep pace with changes in technology. Ensuring that the school has the necessary internal capacity to undertake the transition to our new model is reflected in both our corporate risk profile and our integrated plan.

● (1210)

[Translation]

To deliver this new common curriculum for all public servants, we are building what we call an “ecosystem” of learning accessible anywhere, anytime and at no individual charge.

This rich, diverse collection of learning resources is increasingly available in a wide variety of formats and methods, and offers formal training via instructors or through online courses, as well as performance support, job aids, and opportunities for informal and collaborative learning.

Learning and technology will be synonymous. In this new ecosystem, learning will be delivered in the most efficient and effective way possible. Face-to-face learning will be experiential, whereas foundational training, such as authority delegation training, will be offered online to ensure timely and equitable access across the country.

[English]

We have already begun to see results in our transition to the new model. Last fiscal year, the school delivered training to more than 212,000 registered participants across the country, of which almost 169,000 were online. This represents a 4% increase in the overall number of learners and an 11% increase in the number of online participants, in comparison with the previous year.

[Translation]

Recent performance results show leadership and significant progress in several areas because of the strategies the school has put in place to strengthen our management of human resources, procurement, information management, internal governance and project management.

We are particularly proud of the results of the recent public service employee survey which confirmed significant progress has been achieved in developing a highly engaged and high-performing workforce.

[English]

In closing, Mr. Chair, I would like to say that this is an exciting time for learning in the federal public service. The school takes pride in the opportunity we have to lead the new public service-wide approach to learning. Creating a culture of continuous learning and development is a critical step in equipping all employees, new recruits and seasoned experts alike, with the knowledge and skills they need to continue to serve Canadians with excellence.

We'd be pleased to respond to your questions.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms. May-Cuconato. Thank you for being quick.

We have a little bit of time left. I would say it's enough for one five-minute round for each of the two main parties. I'm sorry, Mr. Byrne, but there probably won't be time to get to the Liberal Party. It's nothing personal, I can assure you.

For the NDP, it's Mathieu Ravignat. You have five minutes, please, Mathieu.

**Mr. Mathieu Ravignat:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to the witnesses for being here.

As a former public servant, I can almost get excited about the changes at your office. In the past, if I think about the commission, I think probably the comments that I most often heard were about the problem of accessibility to courses and also the usefulness of courses. Let's take some time on the usefulness.

A one-size-fits-all model is not necessarily the best way to go when you're dealing with such a varied working group as public servants. I wonder what you've built into the level of consultation with the different types of public servants out there to ensure that, when you go forward with delivering new courses, they're actually relevant to the work people are doing.

●(1215)

**Ms. Danielle May-Cuconato:** We have a number of consultation forums in place internal to the public service, so we're doing exactly what you speak of.

I'm going to ask my colleague Jean-François Fleury to elaborate more on that question.

**Mr. Jean-François Fleury (Vice-President, Learning Programs Branch, Canada School of Public Service):** I think it's a very good question. We take great pride in trying to reach as many public servants as possible from a common approach, but we also recognize the operational differences between those who work in a region versus Ottawa, or those who work in an operational versus a science-based department. Through this common learning, we add specific case studies or simulations that increase the conversation between those differences, so that, for example, managers across the public service, no matter where they are, can better understand the reality of those who are managing an operation versus managing an operation in Ottawa and those who are managing a call centre versus those who are managing a science centre. We really try to add that uniqueness to the conversation during those common learning approaches.

**Mr. Mathieu Ravignat:** Now with regard to accessibility, at least in the past—and you can correct me if I am wrong—there were internal costs for sending somebody to take a course. Some of these courses were very costly—they were contracted out—and often employees had difficulty getting access to courses they needed.

How will this rethink of what's going on increase the accessibility of courses to public servants?

**Ms. Danielle May-Cuconato:** When we speak of changes to our technology and the platforms, it is really to increase that flexibility and invest in a curriculum that can be accessed online.

I don't know, Jean-François, if you want to add to that accessibility question.

**Mr. Jean-François Fleury:** I think, again, it's a great question, because it was one of the principal drivers for the transformation and the change at the school: to make sure that a public servant who works in a remote area has as much access to the level of learning that one in Ottawa does. So the technology in the various platforms—virtual learning, videos, as well as online learning—really enables us to reach out as far and as deep as we can to make sure that there's a stronger equilibrium in access to learning.

**Mr. Mathieu Ravignat:** Can you give me a sense of the ratio of courses that will be or are internally developed to courses that are going to be offered that come from external consultants or contractors and are designed outside the public service?

**Mr. Jean-François Fleury:** On that front most of the curriculum that is linked to HR management and financial management, what we call the enabling functions in government, will be designed and delivered mostly internally.

But we do want to make sure that going forward we introduce private sector experts as well as leading academics to come in and share their thoughts and views on leading-edge practices such as lean management, process management, and risk management, so that we have a stronger balance between those who represent the enabling functions in government and the leading practices outside of government to have a stronger, balanced approach.

**The Chair:** Mr. Ravnignat, I'll have to stop you there. Thank you very much.

For the Conservatives, it is Mr. Adler, I believe. You have five minutes, please, Mr. Adler.

**Mr. Mark Adler (York Centre, CPC):** You're correct, Mr. Chair. Thank you very much.

I would like to find out a bit about.... Well, for example, Carleton University has an excellent school of public administration. Queen's has a very good school, as well as University of Victoria, U of T, and York. Why would I, if I were a public servant, not go there as opposed to here, or vice versa? What are the advantages of attending courses here, as opposed to in a private institution like a university?

**Ms. Danielle May-Cuconato:** The training that we're offering is core to public service and that which is unique to public service. Where training is not unique to public service, that's the business that we're getting out of. There's a great deal of work that's going on to develop our curriculum right now and to do those important reviews.

Jean-François, I don't know if you want to elaborate on that.

• (1220)

**Mr. Jean-François Fleury:** I think every department and every deputy head looks at their leadership requirements and needs, and if those are more generic or the aptitude is served better at the university, they can choose to go there.

Going forward, we are looking to partner more with universities to have joint programming, so that we can get the richness of academia in Canada with the more practical and experiential learning of the public service. So it's really to build a stronger foundation and partnership with those groups.

**Mr. Mark Adler:** Okay, thank you.

If I'm a member of the public service, is the onus on me to...? How would I know that this exists? How would I enrol in programming? What's the process? Can you walk me through it?

**Ms. Danielle May-Cuconato:** We have a learning management system that all public servants have access to. They have usernames and logins. They go into the system and look for the courses that meet their needs, and they enrol. It's pretty straightforward. They also include this in their learning plans, along with their performance management plans with their managers. The great benefit is that our no longer being on a cost recovery funding model, cost doesn't become an issue.

**Mr. Mark Adler:** This is optional, right? It's not essential that as a member of the public service I need to enrol in any of these courses at any given time?

**Ms. Danielle May-Cuconato:** There is some mandatory training related to a person's level of responsibility and the delegations that they hold.

**Mr. Mark Adler:** There is? Okay, thank you.

Also, you mentioned that in 2013-14 a strategic directions initiative was launched. I'm wondering what some of the recommendations of that study were.

**Mr. Jean-François Fleury:** The strategic directions really helped us define where we are now. We looked at the leading practices in learning and leadership development internationally. In North America, we met with leading private sector companies as well as other federal government departments and other governments to really try to grasp where learning was going.

One of the key conclusions of that study was that institutions that have centrally managed learning have a competitive edge, a stronger corporate culture, and actually have more retention and engagement within their organizations. So the move to become more centrally managed here in government was really influenced by the tendency of the corporate universities, for example, and a lot of the big private sector companies.

**Mr. Mark Adler:** So there has been cooperation, then, between the private sector and government.

I'll tell you something. I remember that with simple things like getting your passport renewed, any interaction with government offices used to be a very stressful experience, from the customer-service level through to getting whatever you needed done. Now it's a rather pleasant experience. It's very orderly, very efficient. People are friendly; there's good emphasis on customer service.

Can you take credit for some of that or all of it?

**Mr. Jean-François Fleury:** As for taking credit for that particular example, I'm not too sure I can do that. But I do think that learning does have a strong influence on the professionalization of the culture in the public service and in turn provides better service excellence to Canadians, which is our objective.

**Mr. Mark Adler:** It's quite noticeable now.

Thank you very much, Chair.

**The Chair:** That's perfect timing, Mr. Adler. That concludes your five minutes as well.

Again, to our witnesses, we're very sorry that due to circumstances beyond our control, we have to truncate your presentation today, but we have benefited very much from the information you gave us and the opportunity to learn more about the Canada School of Public Service.

I'm going to thank you again, Ms. May-Cuconato, Mr. Jean-François Fleury, and Mr. Geofredo Garay.

The meeting is adjourned.









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